

TOILET LEARNING PLAN

Learning to use the toilet is a big milestone in a young child's life. Because toilet learning is a complex process, there are many issues caregivers and families must consider before and during the process of toilet training for it to be a successful experience for everyone.

Procedure and Practices

When a parent and caregiver believe a child is ready for toilet learning (generally between 2–4 years of age) both the parent and caregiver will complete the Toilet Learning Checklist. If the child has **MOST** of these skills, it's a good indication that they are most likely ready. If they do not have these skills or have a negative reaction to toilet learning, wait until most of the skills are checked off. Starting too soon can delay the process and cause tears and frustration. Toilet learning is much easier when the child is ready.

Three Signs of Readiness:

- 1. Emotional Readiness** is when a child is able to go to the toilet without being scared of the toilet, and can comfortably sit on the toilet and not be stressed by the process.
- 2. Physical Readiness** is when a child is able to sit on the toilet on their own without falling into the toilet, and is able to pull down/up their pants/underwear.
- 3. Cognitive Readiness** is when the child understands the process of going to the toilet to get rid of waste. A child can feel their own body's signals and is able to tell the adult that he/she needs to use the toilet.

Signs of Readiness Checklist:

- Child is interested in the toilet
- Child can follow simple directions
- Child can communicate that she or he needs to go to the toilet
- Child will remain dry for at least 2 hours at a time during the day
- Child wakes up dry after a nap
- Child will act uncomfortable with soiled or wet diapers
- Child has regular and predictable bowel movements.
- Child is able to sit for a period of time.
- Child can walk to and from the bathroom
- Child can pull down her own pants and pull them up again.
- Child has asked to wear grown-up underwear.



Sanitation and Safety

Encourage children to wipe from front to back. Child-size toilets or modified toilet seats with step stools are recommended. It is good to have a similar setup at home. Potty chairs are not allowed at school for licensing reasons. The toilet and equipment will be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with bleach solution when the seat or area is visibly dirty and at least once daily. Caregivers and children must properly wash their hands after toileting, helping with toileting, cleaning areas, and handling contaminated items.

Soiled Clothes

Per Community Care Licensing, all soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag that can be sealed tightly. Staff will not rinse soiled clothes, because there is more of an opportunity to contaminate hands and other surfaces.

Toilet Learning Techniques

A calm, easygoing approach works best. There are many steps: Discussing, undressing, going, wiping, dressing, flushing, hand washing. Reinforce the child's success at each step. Help children recognize when they are urinating or have a bowel movement. They must be aware of what they are doing before they can do anything about it. Caregivers include the concept of toilet learning into the daily routine, such as reading books that reinforce the skills needed to toilet train.

Plan for Clothes in the Toilet Learning Process

Include the child in the purchase of the potty training underwear as strategy to get them involved in the process. Have your child get excited about choosing their own underwear in order to help the process. As you begin the process also keep in mind that the clothing the child wears should be easy to manage by the child. Clothes with elastic waistbands are easier for the child versus clothing that has belts, complicated buttons and/or zippers.

Never force a child to sit on the toilet, or to sit for long periods of time. This could set up a power struggle and negative feelings toward toilet training. Sometimes too much encouragement can feel like too much pressure on a toddler if s/he is not ready.

Never punish for accidents. Occasional accidents are normal. Clean and change the child immediately. Involve the child in the process of changing their clothes to help them be responsible for their actions. Be positive and reassuring that they will be successful. Once we start the process all adults need to be on the same page and cannot go back. Taking a child from underwear back to diapers is not encouraged due to the confusion it causes in the child.